

Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA

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all action taken in connection with the referendum together with all the ballots cast and all other information furnished to or compiled by the referendum agent.

(d) *Announcement of the results of the referendum.* Announcement of the results of the referendum will be made only at the direction of the Secretary. The referendum agent, or others who assist in the referendum, shall not disclose the results of the referendum or the total number of ballots cast.

§ 900.309 Confidential information.

The ballots cast, the identity of any person who voted, or the manner in which any person voted and all information furnished to, compiled by, or in the possession of the referendum agent, shall be regarded as confidential.

§ 900.310 Supplementary instructions.

The Administrator is authorized to issue instructions and to prescribe forms and ballots, not inconsistent with the provisions of this subpart, to govern the conduct of referenda by referendum agents.

§ 900.311 Submittals or requests.

Interested persons may secure information or make submittals or requests to the Administrator with respect to the provisions contained in this subpart.

Subpart—Procedure for Determining the Qualification of Cooperative Milk Marketing Associations

AUTHORITY: Secs. 1–19, 48 Stat. 31, as amended; 7 U.S.C. 601–674.

SOURCE: 32 FR 9821, July 6, 1967, unless otherwise noted.

§ 900.350 General statement.

Cooperative marketing associations apply for qualification by the Secretary under the Federal milk order program for certain privileges and exemptions. These privileges and exemptions are expressed in the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 (50 Stat. 246) as amended, and the milk marketing orders issued pursuant to its provisions.

§ 900.351 Applications for qualification.

Any association of producers may apply for determinations as to whether it is a qualified cooperative association with authority to represent producers in order referendums; has authorization to collect payment from handlers for members' milk; and is rendering specified marketing services to producers. Applicant associations should supply information for these determinations, using as a guide Application Form DA-25. The application form may be obtained from the Dairy Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250. Determinations required of the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service, by delegation are made by the Director of the Dairy Division. Once issued they are valid until amended, suspended or terminated.

§ 900.352 Confidential information.

The documents and other information submitted by an applicant association and otherwise obtained by investigation, examination of books, documents, papers, records, files and facilities, and in reports filed subsequent to initial determinations of qualification, shall be regarded as confidential and shall be governed by § 900.210.

§ 900.353 Qualification standards.

Statutory requirements for qualification of cooperative associations are provided in subsections (5) and (12) of section 608c of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). The association must: (a) Be a cooperative marketing association of producers, qualified under the provisions of the Act of Congress of February 18, 1922, as amended, known as the "Capper-Volstead Act," (7 U.S.C. 291, 292); (b) have its entire organization and all of its activities under the control of its members; (c) have full authority in the sale of its members' milk; and (d) be engaged in making collective sales or marketing of milk or milk products for the producers thereof. Qualification for exemption from deductions for marketing service payments under specific

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marketing orders and payment for milk of members under specific orders shall be determined in accordance with the terms of the respective marketing orders.

§ 900.354 Inspection and investigation.

The Secretary of Agriculture, or his duly authorized representative, shall have the right, at any time after an application is received, to examine all books, documents, papers, records, files and facilities of the association, to verify any of the information submitted and to procure such other information as may be required to determine whether the association is qualified in accordance with its application.

§ 900.355 Annual reporting.

Determinations of qualification for privileges and exemptions are subject to amendment, termination or suspension if the association does not currently meet the qualification standards. An association found to be qualified pursuant to the Act is required to file an annual report after its annual meeting has been held following the close of its fiscal year. Form DA-24 is used for this purpose. The report form is available at the Dairy Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250. The association is required to file a copy of its report with the Dairy Division at Washington and with the market administrator of each order under which it operates.

§ 900.356 Listing of qualified associations.

A copy of each determination of qualification is furnished to the respective association. Copies are also filed in the Dairy Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, and with the Hearing Clerk, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, where they are available for public inspection. A list of qualified associations engaged in marketing milk under a particular milk marketing order is maintained at the office of the market administrator of the order.

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§ 900.357 Denial of application; suspension or revocation of determination of qualification.

Any cooperative association whose application has been wholly or partially denied, or whose determination of qualification has been wholly or partly revoked or suspended, may petition the Secretary for a review of such action. Such petition shall state facts relevant to the matter for which review is sought. After due notice to such cooperative association, the Director of the Dairy Division, or in his absence the Acting Director, shall hold, in the manner hereinafter specified, an informal hearing.

(a) *Notice.* Notice shall be given in writing and shall be mailed to the last known address of the association, or of an officer thereof, at least 3 days before the date set for a hearing. Such notice shall contain: A statement of the time and place of the hearing, said place to be as convenient to the association as can reasonably be arranged, and may contain a statement of the reason for calling the hearing and the nature of the questions upon which evidence is desired or upon which argument may be presented.

(b) *Parties.* Hearings are not to be public and are to be attended only by representatives of the association and of the Government, and such other persons as either the association or the Government desires to have appear for purposes of submitting information or as counsel.

(c) *Conduct of hearing.* The Director or Acting Director of the Dairy Division, or a person designated by him, shall preside at the hearing. The hearing shall be conducted in such manner as will be most conducive to the proper disposition of the matter. Written statements or briefs may be filed by the association within the time specified by the presiding officer.

(d) *Preliminary report.* The presiding officer shall prepare a preliminary report setting forth a recommendation as to what action shall be taken and the basis for such action. A copy of said report shall be served upon the association by mail or in person. The association may file exceptions to said report within 10 days after service thereof.